

VENTURA COUNTY COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

Questions and Answers

1. ***What is the County Committee on School District Organization?***

The County Committee was created by the California State Legislature in 1949. It functions within the rules and regulations established by the Legislature and its own policies and procedures. It responds to petitioners and School District Governing Boards. Its duties and responsibilities pertain to School Districts – Kindergarten through Community Colleges. The County Committee’s activities are coordinated by the County Superintendent of Schools, and its actions are reported to the State Board of Education.

2. ***Who serves on the County Committee?***

The County Committee on School District Organization consists of eleven members – two representatives from each Supervisorial District and one member serving at large. Committee members are elected at an Annual Meeting of School Trustee Representatives. The term of office is four years. The members serve without pay. In some counties, the County Board of Education acts as the County Committee on School District Organization.

3. ***What are the Board responsibilities of the County Committee?***

The County Committee studies and makes recommendations in the areas of:

- a. The organization and reorganization of school districts.
- b. The transfer of territory between and/or among school districts.
- c. The number of trustees and the manner by which they are elected.

4. ***How often does the County Committee meet?***

The County Committee must have one organizational meeting each year within 30 days of the annual election. Some County Committees meet on a regular basis and others hold their meetings on an as-needed basis called by the Chairperson or by a majority of the County Committee members. The meetings are subject to the provisions of the Brown Act.

5. ***How do items get on the County Committee's agenda?***

The County Superintendent of Schools or designee serves as Secretary to the County Committee and prepares the agenda. Agenda items are originated by or submitted to the County Superintendent of Schools. Official minutes of each County Committee Meeting must be kept and made available according to the rules and regulations of the Committee and are available at the County Superintendent of Schools Office.

6. ***How are new districts organized and reorganized?***

The formation of new districts is a major responsibility of the County Committee. By legislative direction, the County Committee is to give primary consideration to the formation of unified districts. The County Committee must recommend action that dissolves unified school districts and may become involved if lapsation alters the Master Plan. In addition, the County Committee may act to annex or transfer all or part of the territory from one district to another.

7. ***How is organization and reorganization action initiated?***

Action is initiated by a registered voter petition or request from a School District Governing Board. After a study is made, a tentative plan is formulated and the required number of public hearings are held. A report and recommendation are submitted to the appropriate agency (County Board of Supervisors, Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, or State Board of Education).

8. ***How may transfer of territory be accomplished?***

A request to transfer **inhabited** territory from one district to another is initiated by a petition from the resident(s) of an area or by the Governing Boards of the affected school districts. A request to transfer **uninhabited** territory is initiated by a petition from the Governing Boards of the affected school districts or the owner of the territory. After the County Committee has studied the requested transfer and held a hearing on the matter, a report and recommendation are sent to the County Board of Supervisors or the State Board of Education.

9. ***What are the requirements for a citizens' petition?***

Any petition submitted shall include what is proposed, the geographical area involved, the reason(s) for the petition, and the districts affected. The number of signatures varies, depending on the type of action proposed.

Proposed Action	Number of Signatures Required
Formation of a new district	10% or 25% of registered electors of the proposed district.
Unification and other forms of reorganization	10% or 25% of registered electors of the proposed district.
Transfer of territory between/among districts	10% or 25% of the registered electors residing in the proposed territory to be transferred. If the territory is uninhabited, the owner may petition.

10. *Where is the specific authority for the County Committee?*

The California Education Code.

11. *Where can I get specific answers to questions about the County Committee?*

- ◆ From the California Department of Education’s website at: www.cde.ca.gov/re/lr/do
- ◆ From the Ventura County Office of Education’s website at: www.vcoe.org
 - Click on *Administrative Services* space bar; and
 - Click on *School District Organization* (located at left-hand side of screen).